

FR1ENDS of the
CH1LDREN

Central Oregon



2018 - 2019 Gratitude Report

“Friends of the Children is such a vital and personal gift to our community. Each and every kiddo deserves to have an adult in their lives that supports and believes in them. Our region is more equitable, resilient, and healthy as a result of the love and care from Friends of the Children.”

-Donna Mills
Executive Director
Central Oregon Health Council

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Breaking the Cycle of Generational Poverty

Our mission is to impact generational change by empowering youth through relationships with professional mentors – 12+ years, no matter what.

Friends of the Children is a prevention/early intervention program working to enable our nation's highest-risk children to develop the relationships, goals, and skills necessary to break the cycles of violence, poverty, and abuse in order to become contributing members of society. Friends of the Children was founded in Portland, Oregon in 1993 and now serves 21 communities nationally.

We aim to break the cycle of generational poverty by giving children facing the highest risks the ability to create a new story. We do this by providing our community's most vulnerable children with a long-term, salaried, professional mentor, who we call a "Friend," from kindergarten through high school graduation, 12+ years – no matter what.

The goal is that one day all children will have a long-term, consistent relationship with a caring adult who believes in them, which would change the collective stories of our community.

The Harvard Business School Association of Oregon quantified that for every \$1 invested in Friends of the Children, the community benefits from more than \$7 in saved social costs. Helping one child saves the community \$900,000.

Based on demonstrated need and community commitment, our Central Oregon chapter launched in late 2017. After extensive research and partnership discussions, it was clear that, prior to the founding of Friends of the Children Central Oregon, no program existed in the Central Oregon community to serve our most vulnerable children with the level of wrap-around support, longevity, and intentionality our Friends provide. Specifically, we are the first and only professional mentoring organization in Central Oregon.



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Board Chair Letter

This past year was a rapid growth period for Friends of the Children-Central Oregon. The initial launch with twenty-four children has doubled during the first two years of operations. This phenomenal expansion is a testament to the commitment and compassion of the Central Oregon community. The board has spent the better part of the start-up years implementing, advising and supporting a five-year growth plan. This strategic plan sets us on the trajectory to triple the number of children served within five years of launching.

In addition, the board and capital project champions share a vision to secure a forever home for the children served by our organization. Friends-Central Oregon has been operating out of a temporary office in Bend as we launched the program and prepared to procure a long-term home.

While we always welcome children with open arms and love, we are rapidly outgrowing our current space. Through this campaign, we envision creating a sanctuary for children to connect with peers and caring adults, receive academic and social-emotional support, build resiliency, and have fun while feeling safe. Given our vast rural territory and the ongoing displacement of under-served families beyond our small towns, our vision is to create a permanent, centralized home between Bend and Redmond. Our goal is to purchase a five-to-ten-acre property that will include a youth Clubhouse and office space which will also be open to other youth serving organizations. The property also referred to as "The Ranch" will provide beautiful outdoor space for active learning, discovery, and healing from trauma. The Ranch will include a variety of outdoor activities such as a ropes course, a greenhouse, garden beds, and plenty of open space to run around. Please consider joining us in our 2020 capital campaign to provide a safe haven for our youth for decades to come.

We are mindful that every donated dollar represents the dream and investment of our partners in strengthening the communities of Central Oregon. While the needs and the incredible potential of our community's children have never been greater, every day we see the impact of our donors' generosity. To our donors, supporters, champions, and friends, thank you for your generosity and commitment to breaking the cycle of generational poverty, one child at a time. We couldn't do this without you!

Sincerely,

Laura Nofziger
Board Chair

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Executive Director Letter

Not a week goes by where we don't get a call from a community partner, mental health care provider, teacher, school counselor, principal, or parent asking if we can provide professional mentorship for a child. Unfortunately, the answer is almost always, "I'm sorry our program is full." Wouldn't it be perfect if we could say YES?

What if we could say yes to more children who would then experience the commitment, love, and growth that we are facilitating each and every day? Our current children are meeting 100% of their personal goals with dedicated support from their Friend. Some of these goals are "I want to make it across the monkey bars," "I want to learn to count by tens to one hundred," or "I want to learn to ride a bike." Our teaching and school administration partners are reporting a huge decrease in chronic absenteeism, tardiness, and school suspension with program youth. Additionally, our children are making huge strides in self-regulating emotions and expressing kindness towards others. Our children are demonstrating a 50% improvement in reading scores in the first year of joining the Friends of the Children-Central Oregon family. Yes is a powerful word, and we want to say yes more often.

Our children have experienced these successes because of you, our incredible supporters. You have allowed us to bring this unique, evidence-based, life-changing model to children who need us most. We look forward to more community-driven change in 2020 to ensure that every child in Central Oregon hears a "yes" for the 12+ years of support that they so desperately need. 12+ years, no matter what!

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for believing in this innovative program and for your generosity in bringing it to Central Oregon's most vulnerable children. **Together we can break the cycle of generational poverty in our community. One child at a time.**

With Gratitude,

Kim Hatfield
Executive Director

*Pictured left: Jeff (program parent) and Kim



Programming

Thanks to the generosity of our donors and the community we have entered our third year of programming. The initial cohort of Kindergarten and First Graders are now in the second and third grade. This coming fiscal year, Friends-Central Oregon will employ six full-time, paid professional mentors who will serve a total of 48 children. All Friends work in partnership with our Program Director, Nona Armstrong, who oversees the deliverables and outcomes of this innovative program.

Thanks to 100+ Women Who Care's generous gift, we had the opportunity to make a crucial investment in the hiring of a Program Coordinator and Family Liaison, Jennifer Cox. This newly added position continually advocates for program youth by collaborating with community partners such as the Department of Human Services, Family Access Network, School Administration and Court Appointed Special Advocates, so mentors can stay focused on the program's number one value "Children First."

Relationships

Friends and the Program Director work vigorously to build relationships with children's parents and/or caregivers to ensure each child's overall wellbeing and long-term success. Over the course of this past year, Friends connected with parents and/or caregivers a total of 1914 times. Once children enter 1st grade, their Friend starts working with them on five evidence-based roadmap goals that lead to long-term success. This year Friends helped their youth work on:

School Success: **808 times**

Social and Emotional Development: **1889 times**

Improved Health: **786 times**

Making Good Choices: **669 times**

Plans and Skills for the Future: **414 times**

"I wanted to become a Friend because I am passionate about providing a quality relationship to children who most need a positive role model. Growing up in Bend, Oregon I got to experience all the adventure and beauty this community has to offer. I feel that the next generation should get to live in this magical and hopeful world. Friends of the Children is an organization that has proven time and again that reaching children at a young age is the only way to see real results and change. This is why I am so excited to be part of the Friends Central Oregon family."

-Ashley,
Friend/mentor





Collective Impact

Due to strong community support, program staff have the resources to be fully present for their children, no matter what. Thanks to numerous donors such as United Way of Deschutes County and the Central Oregon Health Council, we hired two new Friends, who identified and selected the second cohort of Kindergarten children in the program. While children are selected in Bend and Redmond, they tend to be highly transient due to a number of factors including the affordable housing crisis. Given this fact, we serve children in all three Central Oregon Counties. This past year, Friends collectively put **almost 30,000 miles** on their personal vehicles to mentor youth where they live, play and go to school. However, the investment of resources among our children are well worth it.

Prior to selection for Friends of the Children, multiple schools reported program youth experienced school suspensions, chronic absenteeism, and low academic performance. Over the course of the past school year, the same schools reported a decrease in overall suspensions, chronic absenteeism, and a 50% improvement in reading scores. Not only are most of our youth meeting reading standards for their grade level(s), some are exceeding them. Friends who work alongside youth in their classrooms also reported some youth received, "most improved" awards in reading and math. These results are true indicators that our youth are resilient, and their Friends have found success in empowering them to explore their limitless potential.

Core Assets

Over the next year, our main programmatic fundraising focus is to procure resources to fund children's activities where they can use their personal spark to explore plans and skills for the future. This can look like more opportunities to engage in extra-curricular activities, playing team sports, climbing at the rock gym, playing in the snow while learning to ski or snowboard, learning to swim or ride a bike, checking out an art or cooking class, or learning to play a musical instrument.

Friend's interactions with children are flexible and informal, but never random. The "Core Asset" initiative is a youth development strategy providing structure and targeting development. Below is a description of each core asset and the number of times Friends collectively worked with their youth on each core asset over this past year.



1,243

1. GROWTH MINDSET: *I love learning and know that my abilities will improve through dedication and effort.* We believe our knowledge and competence in all areas of life grow with effort and that our work has personal value.



1,564

2. POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP BUILDING: *I get along well with others and am able to find people to support me.* We have the ability to communicate effectively and discern how to engage and collaborate in healthy, supportive relationships for diverse purposes in all areas of our lives.



717

3. FIND YOUR SPARK: *I use creativity to explore my passions.* We use our imagination, curiosity, and creativity to generate ideas and discover our strengths and passions.



860

4. PROBLEM SOLVING: *I know how to weigh the pros and cons and make a decision.* We self-reflect and breakdown problems or issues into manageable parts, determine different strategies to achieve a solution and make a decision.



726

5. SELF-DETERMINATION: *I believe in myself and am able to set goals and achieve them.* We are committed to achieving our goals over time, by setting short and long-term goals, and managing challenges.



1,032

6. SELF-MANAGEMENT: *I know how to manage my feelings and take care of myself in a healthy way.* We are able to identify, reflect on, and manage our emotions. We are committed to continual self-care.



1,243

7. PERSEVERANCE AND GRIT: *I work hard through challenges and finish what I start.* We can persist to the best of our ability despite distractions, obstacles, or setbacks.



847

8. HOPE: *When I have tough times, I believe it can get better.* We understand difficulties within a situation and believe it will improve.



1,221

9. BELONGING: *I understand who I am, have a place where I feel accepted, and know that my contributions count.* We value our own identity, culture and beliefs, knowing that our community needs and appreciates our participation.

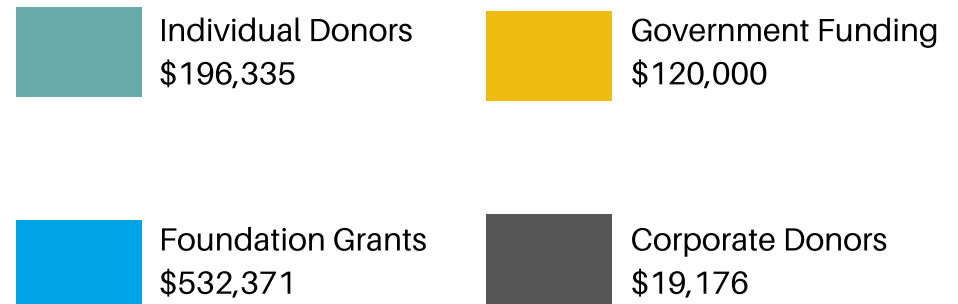
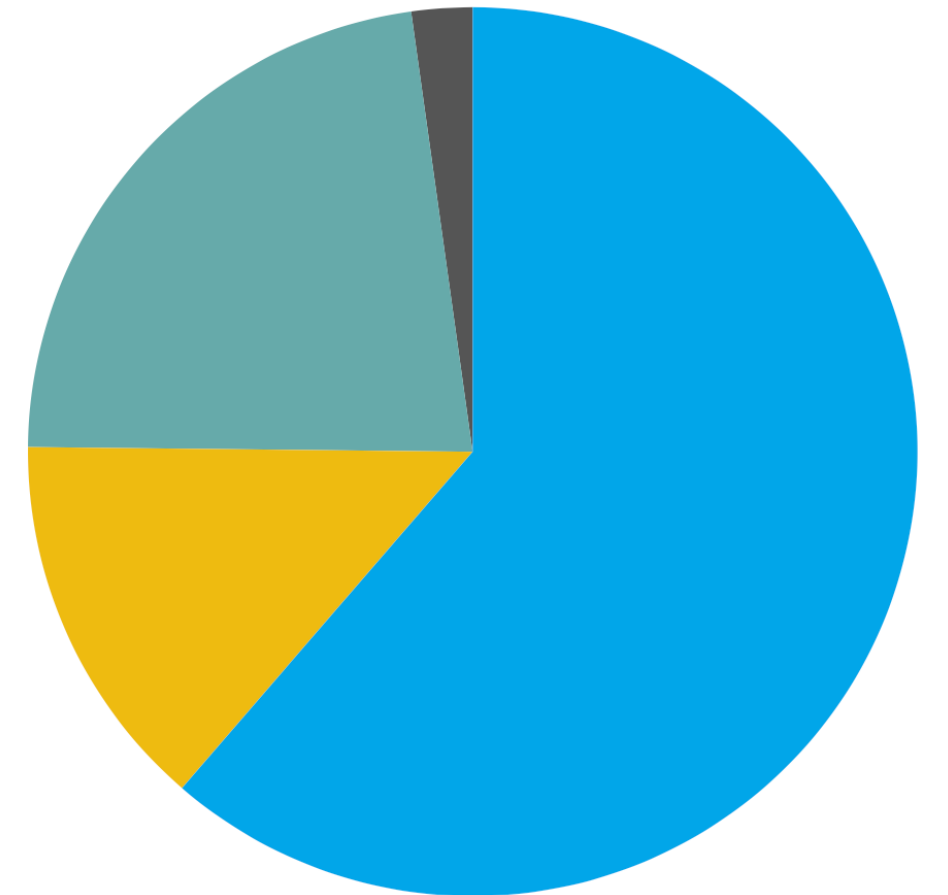
2018 - 2019 Fiscal Report

Revenue and Community
Support Total: \$867,882

Expenses Total: \$717,936

Net Reserve: \$149,946

Investments: \$101,976





Thank You!

2018-2019 was an amazing year because of the support of so many partners. We want to acknowledge all of our donors for their generous contributions!

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ppritchard@friendscentraloregon.org*



A Story of Perserverance

Friend/Mentor Sarah went to pick up Grace for an outing recently and noticed her bicycle lying in front of her house. The seat was not working correctly and her dad asked if Sarah would help fix it.

They decided to spend part of their outing fixing the bike, and took it to Pine Mountain Sports (one of our awesome partners!) to see if they could help.

Grace thought it was so cool when Alex, the mechanic, put it up on the rack. He said to her, "Let's shine this thing up!" He wiped it down, fixed the seat and grips, and adjusted the brakes. The generosity of Alex and Pine Mountain, doing all the work for free, was so kind. We are really grateful for support from local organizations like them.

Afterward, Grace said, "I feel like it's a new bike, Sarah!" It was such a cool moment for Sarah because it showed just how far Grace has come in their time together--moving from training wheels to cruising around on two wheels.

We are so proud of the powerful relationship Grace and Sarah have developed and the growth it has meant for Grace. Way to show perseverance and grit on your bike, Grace!

FRIENDS of the CHILDREN

Central Oregon

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Friends of the Children Central Oregon is committed to transparency in every part of our organization. We are proud to announce that we were awarded the Platinum Seal of Transparency, the highest seal possible for nonprofits, by GuideStar, the world's largest source of information on nonprofit organizations.